



February 28, 2022

***Via Electronic Mail***

Nathalie Christian

[122046-07264069@requests.muckrock.com](mailto:122046-07264069@requests.muckrock.com)

Re: Notice of Extension on Response to Request for Public Records Received  
February 3, 2022

Dear Nathalie Christian:

1. The City of Benicia (“City”) is in receipt of your email request seeking “Communications from
  - a. Mayor Steve Young, Tom Campbell, and Trevor Macenki, pertaining to
  - b. Brandon Greene, Nimat Shakoor-Grantham, and Andre Stewart and made between November 1, 2020 and December 10, 2021
2. Communications from
  - a. Benicia City Council Members, Steve Young, Tom Campbell, Trevor Macenski, Christina Strawbridge, Lionel Largaespada;
  - b. City Manager Erik Upson; and
  - c. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Manager Dr. Maliika Chambers
  - d. Regarding
    - i. the outreach, nomination, and selection process for the Committee United for Racial Justice (CURE), and dated from November 1, 2020 to December 10, 2021”.

This letter shall serve as the City’s formal written response to your request under the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 6250 *et seq.*).

The City wishes to cooperate to the fullest extent possible with the Public Records Act. Under established California law, the City is obliged to comply with a request for a public record so long as the requester makes a specific and focused request for information, that information is maintained by the City in its ordinary course of business, the information is disclosable, and the record can be located with reasonable effort. The Public Records Act provides for the inspection or copying of existing identifiable public

records; it does not compel the City to create new records, lists, privilege logs, or reports in response to a request.

Consistent with that requirement, the City has conducted a search and is providing the documents attached, which includes email communications from the requested council members, as well as the interview questions, and a resolution from the October 5, 2021 meeting. A link to that meeting is also provided below.

[https://benicia.granicus.com/player/clip/3543?view\\_id=1&redirect=true](https://benicia.granicus.com/player/clip/3543?view_id=1&redirect=true)

Please note, however, portions of the requested records responsive to your request have been redacted under the public interest exemption, as the public interest in disclosure of personal information was outweighed by the public interest in protecting that information from disclosure. (California Government Code § 6255.) Other records responsive to your request have been withheld under the deliberative process privilege as responsive records included pre-decisional communications among policy makers, which on the facts of the particular case, the public interest served by not making the record public clearly outweighs the public interest served by disclosure. (Government Code § 6255; *Citizens for A Better Environment v. Department of Food & Agriculture* (1985) 171 Cal.App.3d 704, 717.) In addition, other records were withheld under the Attorney-Client Privilege, which are exempted from disclosure pursuant to Government Code 6254(k). (*See: Evidence Code sections 952 and 954; Agricultural Labor Relations Bd. v. Superior Court* (2016) 4 Cal.App.5th 675, 688.)

Please also note that the City will continue its search and review of records to ensure it has conducted a full and thorough review and provided all responsive, non-exempt, non-privileged records. Part of completing that review will require the City to review whether any additional documents potentially responsive should be withheld or redacted due to any applicable exemption, including, for example, based upon the public interest exemption (Government Code 6255), the deliberative process privilege, or the attorney client privilege. The City will provide you a further update by March 14, 2022.

Also please be advised that the timelines for a response required under Benicia Municipal Code Chapter 4.12 were suspended on April 7, 2020, by Resolution No. 20-32, as staffing limitations severely impact the City's ability to timely respond to such requests. This suspension shall remain in effect until the termination of the declared state of emergency or until such time as it is terminated by the Director of Emergency Services or the City Council of the City of Benicia. The City continues its commitment to governmental transparency and will continue to issue responses to requests pursuant to the requirements of the California Public Records Act.

If you have any questions about the City's response or would like to discuss your request, please feel free to contact me directly at [abussart@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:abussart@ci.benicia.ca.us) (707) 746-4200. As  
be in touch again by March 14, 2022.



Ashley Bussart, Deputy City Clerk

cc: Benjamin Stock, City Attorney  
Erik Upson, City Manager  
Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk  
File

**Lisa Wolfe**

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**From:** Lionel Largaespada  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 1, 2021 3:31 PM  
**To:** Erik Upson  
**Subject:** BBLM statement  
**Attachments:** STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER.pdf

FYI, in case you weren't aware BBLM put out another statement regarding the subcommittee recommendations for CURE.

Lionel Largaespada  
Councilmember  
City of Benicia  
[REDACTED]  
250 E L Street  
Benicia, CA 94510  
llargaespada@ci.benicia.ca.us

# STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER

November 29, 2021

Contact:

BBLM Leadership Representative

Ms. Rozalind Sinnamon-Johnson

Phone: (707) 334-3060

Email: [beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com](mailto:beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com)

## STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, stand in solidarity with Benicia Black Lives Matter (“BBLM”) in condemning the Benicia City Council’s recent actions regarding the so-called Committee United for Racial Equity (“CURE”). First, we condemn City Council’s targeted restructuring of Resolution 20-103, which removed an essential provision that enshrined two BBLM members’ placements within CURE; second, we condemn the City Council’s selection-subcommittee’s decision, put forward by Council Members Tom Campbell and Trevor Macenski, to not advance two BBLM candidates, Brandon Greene and Kashanna Patton-Lee, to CURE. A summary of events to date follows the signatures of this statement.

These actions collectively represent Benicia City Council and its subcommittee’s concerted efforts to erase BBLM’s work and leadership in CURE’s formation and water down—or perhaps even block—CURE’s impact before its work has started. More disturbingly, the exclusion of Brandon Greene in particular, accompanied by troubling comments made on the record by Council Member Campbell, indicate that the actions taken toward Brandon were targeted and personal in nature, and not based on Brandon’s efforts to date—including his guidance as co-author of Resolution 20-103—nor based on his obvious eligibility to sit on CURE as Director of ACLU Northern California’s racial justice and economics program, among many other qualifications.

Similarly, the decision to block Kashanna appears to be a calculated choice by the subcommittee to erase her work in Benicia as a strong advocate for and leader in racial justice work, demonstrated by the many successful events that she has led or co-led to advance education and community building, such as BBLM’s inaugural Juneteenth celebration or the very recent Ruby Bridges March.

Instead, Benicia City Council Members appear to have chosen a future for CURE that may ultimately defeat its purpose. Rather than advancing those like Brandon and Kashanna, who have openly dedicated themselves to substantive, necessary change, and the hard work that will support it, City Council have chosen a model of “business as usual,” in which seats were assigned to those who may appear “safe”—those who are friends with or have openly stated that they are comfortable with the status quo in Benicia. This assessment does not apply to all of those who were selected for advancement, but it is clear that the subcommittee is not interested in the considerable effort, reflection, and self-examination required to make City government and Benicia in general truly equitable. Has the City of Benicia returned to its original position that Benicia is not in need of an equity study and that it is questionable whether Benicia even has a racism problem?

As individuals and organizations who visibly and vocally have championed racial justice in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, we the undersigned have determined that Benicia City Council’s actions appear steeped in its acceptance of white supremacy culture, wherein the Council—comprised almost entirely of white men—and the CURE appointments subcommittee—comprised exclusively of white men—took personal, unprofessional shots at a well-qualified Black professional and community advocate in order to maintain their power and privilege and to block any change that would threaten it.

Benicia City Council and Council Member Campbell and Macenski’s actions cannot be allowed to stand without scrutiny and condemnation. They are the antithesis of the change loudly called for by Black advocates and organizers nationwide. This is an issue of both good governance and community trust, something that the Benicia City Council seems to be lacking.

As such we not only sign on in support of the substance of the public comment submitted by BBLM at the Council meetings where these actions were taken, but also as democratic and community organizations dedicated to walking in our values and demanding better from our representatives.

f3onlinemarketing@gmail.com (not shared) Switch account

### SIGN THE LETTER

Organization

Individual name(s)



### Comments

### SUMMARY OF EVENTS TO DATE

The standing City Council subcommittee called the Committee United for Racial Equity ("CURE"), so named by Benicia Black Lives Matter ("BBLM") in collaboration with current City Manager Erik Upson, is an embodiment of Resolution 20-103 that was adopted at the August 25, 2020 City Council meeting. The resolution, as well as the formation of BBLM, were borne out of the anger, grief, and exhaustion felt nationwide after the viral murder of George Floyd. His tragic and avoidable death, one of many instances of police against Black and Brown communities that tapped into the voyeuristic interest of an American populace that had numerous times before and sadly numerous times after ignored the cries of Black and Brown communities, was said to be the beginning of a racial reckoning in America.

In Benicia, this energy was harnessed into youth-led demonstrations and organizing, all of which culminated in the founding and expansion of BBLM as well as the consideration of a resolution to address systemic inequity in Benicia—namely, Resolution 20-103. The content of this resolution was based almost entirely on recommendations emailed by BBLM co-founder Brandon Greene to then Mayor Elizabeth Patterson in response to the changes Brandon and our Black and Brown communities wished to see in Benicia. Through a series of meetings with the former City Manager and Erik Upson, who was Police Chief at the time, along with additional members of BBLM, the emailed proposal was formalized into the resolution and submitted for consideration and approval to the City Council. Though a year has now passed since that time, the memory of the August 2020 meeting is still vivid in the minds of BBLM members. At that meeting, not only was the necessity of such a position such as the one Dr. Maliika Chambers now holds subject to intense and painful scrutiny, but the resolution was also almost not passed due to a disagreement over the comparatively trivial amount of money that position would require the City to pay. Indeed, rather than make the position permanent, the position was made temporary. This was done under the auspices that Benicia was not in need of an equity study and that it was questionable whether Benicia even has a racism problem.

One year later, after patiently waiting for the work of CURE to begin, and after being promised that two of its members would have a place on the subcommittee that would not exist without them, BBLM members had to sit and watch as the Council—against public outcry—voted to reconstitute the membership of CURE, making all of the seats at large. BBLM members who had for a year been in constant contact with Dr. Chambers, whose position was established by BBLM's own efforts, about when the work would start were told that they would have to apply and interview for the subcommittee. Three members applied: 1) Brandon Greene, Director of the Racial Justice and Economics Program for the Northern Californian arm of the ACLU; 2) Amira Barger, Public Health and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant; and 3) Kashanna Harmon-Lee, experienced medical professional and educational/health advocate. Of the three BBLM members who applied, only Amira was advanced.

The City Council subcommittee's preferences to the mayor for other candidates despite the obvious qualifications of the BBLM applicants were made without adherence to and no respect for the work of those who are responsible for the proposed mission and mandate of CURE—in particular, the work of Brandon Greene. Instead, the subcommittee's choice to advance other candidates appears to be a concerted action on behalf of City Council to erase the work of BBLM and to dilute the work of the CURE subcommittee before that work has even begun, an action in line with the current reporting about the lack of fidelity to the value of actual change, supposedly promised by the cries of allyship at the inception of this country's so-called racial

reckoning. Indeed, just one year after making a series of grand promises to its Black and Brown communities, Benicia is now a hub of the inevitable backlash that accompanies any attempts to take bold steps to address racial inequity. With no voyeuristic element in the form of public attention to buoy its progress, Benicia's leadership has begun to retreat from its promises, even as it asks us to trust its intentions.

BBLM now asks the question - has the City of Benicia returned to its original position that Benicia is not in need of an equity study and that it is questionable whether Benicia has a racism problem?

"Why does this pattern keep repeating? Why does it seem like with every pivotal moment, like when thousands were taking to the street to protest police brutality, we eventually end up with some version of the status quo? Perhaps it's the final result of the inherent friction between two competing ideas that are embedded in the American experience: That racial inequality is pervasive in our society—and the illusion that it's actually a problem of the past."

The positive contributions BBLM has made to Benicia are numerous and substantive, with impacts felt both within our local community and beyond. Since its inception, BBLM has been involved in organizing everything from poetry readings, youth-focused dance classes, community-wide education events in collaboration with local programs, to backpack and food giveaways, to the inaugural Juneteenth flag-raising and annual community celebration—the last being another provision of the resolution that was passed. Future planned events include a warm coat drive and food giveaway for our community's most vulnerable residents, an educational forum led by Indigenous community leader Mary Ann Buggs, an educational event that will introduce the history and nature of the Kwanzaa celebration, a march to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and more. Despite veiled suggestions otherwise, BBLM has shown over and over again that it stands in solidarity with the Benicia community, and is here to stay.

For two eminently qualified BBLM members—whose many years of professional, community, and lived experience in imagining and implementing real change are truly substantial—to be overlooked in the subcommittee's selection process is an affront to the effort BBLM has put into the drafting, passage, and realization of Resolution 20-103 along with its co-authors. BBLM strongly objects to the perceived efforts of the subcommittee to dilute and mismanage the CURE subcommittee before it has even had a chance to start working, and seeks active, meaningful dialogue with City Council, its staff, and the community in general to address these real and substantial concerns.

###

#### About

Benicia Black Lives Matter is a grassroots community group organized to address anti-Black racism in the city of Benicia. There is a lack of Black representation across City leadership, departments, and voluntary boards. The lack of Black representation tells a story of our complacency as a community and more so, the impact on our Black Benicians lived experience. The good news is, we can rebuild the City of Benicia into a better Benicia, one commitment and one change at a time – and we have a strategy to do so. Our Strategy: Actively Commit to Change. The City of Benicia must commit to a specific vision of what a better, more inclusive and equitable future looks like. For additional information see [beniciablacklivesmatter.com](http://beniciablacklivesmatter.com).

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## Lisa Wolfe

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**From:** Erik Upson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 1, 2021 3:44 PM  
**To:** Maliika Chambers; Mario Giuliani; Sarah Terherst; Ben Stock  
**Subject:** FW: BBLM statement  
**Attachments:** STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER.pdf

FYI

**From:** Lionel Largaespada <LLargaespada@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 1, 2021 3:31 PM  
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**Subject:** BBLM statement

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## Ashley Bussart

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**From:** Steve Young  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2022 9:56 AM  
**To:** Ashley Bussart  
**Subject:** sh: CURE Committee

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**From:** Trevor Macenski <TMacenski@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 15, 2021 5:10 PM  
**To:** Nimat Grantham <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** Steve Young <SYoung@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Re: CURE Committee

Greatly appreciate your service to the community.

Trevor Macenski  
City Council Member  
Email: TMacenski@ci.Benicia.ca.us  
Phone: 916-508-4170

> On Nov 15, 2021, at 3:40 PM, Nimat Grantham <[REDACTED]> wrote:  
>

## Ashley Bussart

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**From:** Steve Young  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2022 9:54 AM  
**To:** Ashley Bussart  
**Subject:** Fw: BBLM meeting

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**From:** Steve Young <SYoung@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 6, 2021 2:24 PM  
**To:** Maliika Chambers <MChambers@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Cc:** Erik Upson <EUpson@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Re: BBLM meeting

Thank you for your kind words.

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**From:** Maliika Chambers <MChambers@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 6, 2021 11:23 AM  
**To:** Steve Young <SYoung@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Cc:** Erik Upson <EUpson@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Re: BBLM meeting

Good morning Steve,

Of course, I'd be happy to meet with you, and Erik will attend as well. I will ask Sarah Grebe to set up some time for us this week.

I'd also like to say that I enjoyed the way you moderated the discussion last night, and thought your questions and comments were on point. Leadership in action, to say the least - thank you!

All the best,

Maliika

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**From:** Steve Young <SYoung@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 6, 2021 8:42 AM  
**To:** Maliika Chambers <MChambers@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Cc:** Erik Upson <EUpson@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Subject:** BBLM meeting

Good Morning Maliika

After the meeting last night and the flurry of criticism we received from BBLM supporters, I want to reach out and meet with Brandon Greene. But before doing so, I would like to sit down with you and go over a few issues.

Do you have some time to meet later this week?

Steve

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**From:** Steve Young  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2022 9:53 AM  
**To:** Ashley Bussart  
**Subject:** Fw: CURE meeting date

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**From:** Steve Young  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 6, 2021 10:37 PM  
**To:** Sarah Grebe <SGrebe@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Subject:** CURE meeting date

what was the date of the council meeting where we approved the CURE and malikka's position?

## BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER (BBLM) CO-FOUNDER UPDATE

A month or so before September 29, 2021, some members of Benicia Black Lives Matter (BBLM) voted to have BBLM stand for issues that include but are not limited to: "Abolishing the Police."

Originally BBLM stood for reforming, transforming, and improving law enforcement. This new stance and other recently adopted issues go against the original focus and goals of BBLM. The change in BBLM direction is welcomed by the current remaining members.

BBLM hadn't established a leadership model similar to that of the National Black Lives Matter organization originally because BBLM was not formed to be similar to the National Black Lives Matter organization. BBLM was founded especially to address issues of inequity and bias within "Benicia."

I, with a heavy heart cannot support this current change and must separate from BBLM as other original members have done before me. I look forward to a mutually peaceful transition from BBLM within the next 90 days.

I am honored that BBLM has benefited all Benicia citizens by successfully identifying inequity and racial bias hiding within plain sight.

BBLM has been committed to educating the public about systemic racism and injustice, to healed with empathetic and meaningful collaboration and activism.

There is still so much to do and I will continue the progressive collaborations already in place to address equity issues with, but not limited to Citizens, the City, School District and County from another organization.

I wish the newly formed BBLM group good luck in their future endeavors.

Until such mutual transition is finalized, I remain available for community engagement and conversation; I can be reached at [beniciablacklivesmatter1@gmail.com](mailto:beniciablacklivesmatter1@gmail.com) or [REDACTED] and at Twitter @beniciablacklivesmatter1

With Respect and Gratitude,

Nimat Shakoor-Grantham

Co-Founder of Benicia Black Lives Matter (BBLM)

\*\*\*\*\*

Steve,

Please let me know if you need anything else or if this wasn't what you wanted. Thank you so much!

## Sarah Grebe

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2022 11:16 AM  
**To:** Sarah Grebe  
**Subject:** Fwd: [Benicia Resist!] ADD YOUR NAMES: Statement in Solidarity with BBLM

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Steve Young <[REDACTED]>  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wed, Dec 8, 2021 5:59 pm  
**Subject:** Re: [Benicia Resist!] ADD YOUR NAMES: Statement in Solidarity with BBLM

I assume they'll send it to us eventually  
I can say your favorite mayor signed it

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 8, 2021, at 4:08 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks Steve

But as seems to be the case always so far I can't find a list of names on a petition so I don't know if there were 300 or 3 who signed any petition.  
Tom

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Steve Young <[REDACTED]>  
**To:** Tom Campbell <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wed, Dec 8, 2021 3:59 pm  
**Subject:** Fwd: [Benicia Resist!] ADD YOUR NAMES: Statement in Solidarity with BBLM

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Nathalie Christian** <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Tue, Nov 30, 2021 at 4:06 PM  
**Subject:** [Benicia Resist!] ADD YOUR NAMES: Statement in Solidarity with BBLM  
**To:** Benicia Resist! <[benicia-resist@googlegroups.com](mailto:benicia-resist@googlegroups.com)>

At the request of Benicia Black Lives Matter (BBLM), I am sharing this appeal for your signatures and organizational support to add to an important statement of solidarity.

Personally, I am pleased to be a member of a progressive mailing list like this one because we, and especially us "white allies" here, have in this moment the opportunity to stand in solidarity with BBLM in their efforts to bring true change to Benicia, despite "whitelash" and so on. BBLM and Benicia Resist are great groups, with tremendous affinity and mutual goals, and I join BBLM in imploring each of you to show genuine solidarity and add your name to this letter by filling out the linked form (linked immediately below and also further down).

Then, please share this request with your friends and family, and on your social media, and be sure to link the form.

**[LINK TO FORM TO SIGN](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZSS63pi0N_DxZBuy3IOSnZrGuZmCr0pIT4JeoBdJZFae3qw/viewform?usp=sf_link)**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZSS63pi0N\\_DxZBuy3IOSnZrGuZmCr0pIT4JeoBdJZFae3qw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZSS63pi0N_DxZBuy3IOSnZrGuZmCr0pIT4JeoBdJZFae3qw/viewform?usp=sf_link)

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To the Benicia Resist mailing list:

BBLM acknowledges that the relationships we have built with other organizations, leaders, and individuals like you have helped us make numerous positive contributions to our community, and we thank you for your solidarity as we work together to dismantle white supremacy in Benicia and beyond.

Today, we seek your support in calling attention to and righting a grievous harm perpetrated by Benicia City Council and aimed at BBLM as an organization, its members as individuals, their hard work, and the continuing work we do together to highlight injustice and inequity in both Benicia and Solano County as a whole.

**Please read this impact and solidarity statement and add your organization's name and the names of any individual members who stand in support of BBLM's essential and incredibly timely work to dismantle white supremacy in our communities and in particular our City Governments.**

As a brief summary, Benicia City Council and its standing subcommittee responsible for committee/board selection have, against the backdrop of significant public outcry, broken key promises regarding the structure and composition of the Committee for Racial Equity (CURE), as enshrined in Benicia's Resolution 20-103. Specifically, after strategically restructuring how seats on CURE would be filled, the selection-subcommittee rejected two highly qualified applicants from placement, including one of the resolution's co-authors, Brandon Greene (Director of the Racial Justice and Economics Program for the Northern Californian arm of the ACLU).

This series of events is not coincidental: Benicia City Council appears to be deliberately erasing BBLM's agency and ability to initiate true change in Benicia—and erasing Brandon Greene's efforts to see CURE realized to its full potential, in particular—before CURE's work has even begun. These actions reflect current reporting about the lack of fidelity to the value of actual change, supposedly promised by the cries of allyship at the inception of this country's so-called racial reckoning. Indeed, just one year after making a series of grand promises to its Black and Brown communities, Benicia is now a hub of the inevitable backlash that accompanies any attempts to take bold steps to address racial inequity—and Benicia's leadership appears all too eager to walk back on promises and proclamations that were politically expedient then but appear less so now.

BBLM strongly objects to the perceived efforts of Benicia City Council and the selection subcommittee to dilute and mismanage CURE before it has even had a chance to start working. Please add your organization's name to this letter and ask individual members to add their names as well to show Benicia City Council that its efforts to uphold white supremacy culture in Benicia will not go unanswered.

Sincerely,  
Benicia Black Lives Matter Leadership Team and General Membership

**LINK TO FORM TO SIGN**

([https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZSS63pi0N\\_DxZBuy3lOSnZrGuZmCr0plT4JeoBdJZFae3qw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZSS63pi0N_DxZBuy3lOSnZrGuZmCr0plT4JeoBdJZFae3qw/viewform?usp=sf_link))

###

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Please make sure the content of your post matches the content of your subject line.

Please remember that anything posted to this list may be forwarded to anyone by any of the 145+ members of this group. Think of this as stepping up to a live microphone in a large crowd.

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You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Benicia Resist!" group. To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to [benicia-resist+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:benicia-resist+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com).

To view this discussion on the web visit [https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/benicia-resist/CAN3my5dh\\_%3Dqj\\_6Q-D5bY2jrzJGYGQLcycBVjLFv%2BWwQ6G\\_fZkA%40mail.gmail.com](https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/benicia-resist/CAN3my5dh_%3Dqj_6Q-D5bY2jrzJGYGQLcycBVjLFv%2BWwQ6G_fZkA%40mail.gmail.com).



**Sarah Grebe**

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2022 11:13 AM  
**To:** Sarah Grebe  
**Subject:** Fwd: BBLM statement  
**Attachments:** STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER.pdf

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Lionel Largaespada [REDACTED]

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Wed, Dec 1, 2021 3:25 pm

**Subject:** BBLM statement

FYI, in case you weren't aware BBLM put out another statement regarding the subcommittee recommendations for CURE.

# STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER

November 29, 2021

Contact:

BBLM Leadership Representative

Ms. Rozalind Sinnamon-Johnson

Phone: (707) 334-3060

Email: [beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com](mailto:beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com)

## STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, stand in solidarity with Benicia Black Lives Matter (“BBLM”) in condemning the Benicia City Council’s recent actions regarding the so-called Committee United for Racial Equity (“CURE”). First, we condemn City Council’s targeted restructuring of Resolution 20-103, which removed an essential provision that enshrined two BBLM members’ placements within CURE; second, we condemn the City Council’s selection-subcommittee’s decision, put forward by Council Members Tom Campbell and Trevor Macenski, to not advance two BBLM candidates, Brandon Greene and Kashanna Patton-Lee, to CURE. A summary of events to date follows the signatures of this statement.

These actions collectively represent Benicia City Council and its subcommittee’s concerted efforts to erase BBLM’s work and leadership in CURE’s formation and water down—or perhaps even block—CURE’s impact before its work has started. More disturbingly, the exclusion of Brandon Greene in particular, accompanied by troubling comments made on the record by Council Member Campbell, indicate that the actions taken toward Brandon were targeted and personal in nature, and not based on Brandon’s efforts to date—including his guidance as co-author of Resolution 20-103—nor based on his obvious eligibility to sit on CURE as Director of ACLU Northern California’s racial justice and economics program, among many other qualifications.

Similarly, the decision to block Kashanna appears to be a calculated choice by the subcommittee to erase her work in Benicia as a strong advocate for and leader in racial justice work, demonstrated by the many successful events that she has led or co-led to advance education and community building, such as BBLM’s inaugural Juneteenth celebration or the very recent Ruby Bridges March.

Instead, Benicia City Council Members appear to have chosen a future for CURE that may ultimately defeat its purpose. Rather than advancing those like Brandon and Kashanna, who have openly dedicated themselves to substantive, necessary change, and the hard work that will support it, City Council have chosen a model of “business as usual,” in which seats were assigned to those who may appear “safe”—those who are friends with or have openly stated that they are comfortable with the status quo in Benicia. This assessment does not apply to all of those who were selected for advancement, but it is clear that the subcommittee is not interested in the considerable effort, reflection, and self-examination required to make City government and Benicia in general truly equitable. Has the City of Benicia returned to its original position that Benicia is not in need of an equity study and that it is questionable whether Benicia even has a racism problem?

As individuals and organizations who visibly and vocally have championed racial justice in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, we the undersigned have determined that Benicia City Council’s actions appear steeped in its acceptance of white supremacy culture, wherein the Council—comprised almost entirely of white men—and the CURE appointments subcommittee—comprised exclusively of white men—took personal, unprofessional shots at a well-qualified Black professional and community advocate in order to maintain their power and privilege and to block any change that would threaten it.

Benicia City Council and Council Member Campbell and Macenski’s actions cannot be allowed to stand without scrutiny and condemnation. They are the antithesis of the change loudly called for by Black advocates and organizers nationwide. This is an issue of both good governance and community trust, something that the Benicia City Council seems to be lacking.

As such we not only sign on in support of the substance of the public comment submitted by BBLM at the Council meetings where these actions were taken, but also as democratic and community organizations dedicated to walking in our values and demanding better from our representatives.

f3onlinemarketing@gmail.com (not shared) [Switch account](#)

SIGN THE LETTER

Organization

Individual name(s)

Comments

### SUMMARY OF EVENTS TO DATE

The standing City Council subcommittee called the Committee United for Racial Equity (“CURE”), so named by Benicia Black Lives Matter (“BBLM”) in collaboration with current City Manager Erik Upson, is an embodiment of Resolution 20-103 that was adopted at the August 25, 2020 City Council meeting. The resolution, as well as the formation of BBLM, were borne out of the anger, grief, and exhaustion felt nationwide after the viral murder of George Floyd. His tragic and avoidable death, one of many instances of police against Black and Brown communities that tapped into the voyeuristic interest of an American populace that had numerous times before and sadly numerous times after ignored the cries of Black and Brown communities, was said to be the beginning of a racial reckoning in America.

In Benicia, this energy was harnessed into youth-led demonstrations and organizing, all of which culminated in the founding and expansion of BBLM as well as the consideration of a resolution to address systemic inequity in Benicia—namely, Resolution 20-103. The content of this resolution was based almost entirely on recommendations emailed by BBLM co-founder Brandon Greene to then Mayor Elizabeth Patterson in response to the changes Brandon and our Black and Brown communities wished to see in Benicia. Through a series of meetings with the former City Manager and Erik Upson, who was Police Chief at the time, along with additional members of BBLM, the emailed proposal was formalized into the resolution and submitted for consideration and approval to the City Council. Though a year has now passed since that time, the memory of the August 2020 meeting is still vivid in the minds of BBLM members. At that meeting, not only was the necessity of such a position such as the one Dr. Maliika Chambers now holds subject to intense and painful scrutiny, but the resolution was also almost not passed due to a disagreement over the comparatively trivial amount of money that position would require the City to pay. Indeed, rather than make the position permanent, the position was made temporary. This was done under the auspices that Benicia was not in need of an equity study and that it was questionable whether Benicia even has a racism problem.

One year later, after patiently waiting for the work of CURE to begin, and after being promised that two of its members would have a place on the subcommittee that would not exist without them, BBLM members had to sit and watch as the Council—against public outcry—voted to reconstitute the membership of CURE, making all of the seats at large. BBLM members who had for a year been in constant contact with Dr. Chambers, whose position was established by BBLM’s own efforts, about when the work would start were told that they would have to apply and interview for the subcommittee. Three members applied: 1) Brandon Greene, Director of the Racial Justice and Economics Program for the Northern Californian arm of the ACLU; 2) Amira Barger, Public Health and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant; and 3) Kashanna Harmon-Lee, experienced medical professional and educational/health advocate. Of the three BBLM members who applied, only Amira was advanced.

The City Council subcommittee’s preferences to the mayor for other candidates despite the obvious qualifications of the BBLM applicants were made without adherence to and no respect for the work of those who are responsible for the proposed mission and mandate of CURE—in particular, the work of Brandon Greene. Instead, the subcommittee’s choice to advance other candidates appears to be a concerted action on behalf of City Council to erase the work of BBLM and to dilute the work of the CURE subcommittee before that work has even begun, an action in line with the current reporting about the lack of fidelity to the value of actual change, supposedly promised by the cries of allyship at the inception of this country’s so-called racial

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BBLM now asks the question - has the City of Benicia returned to its original position that Benicia is not in need of an equity study and that it is questionable whether Benicia has a racism problem?

"Why does this pattern keep repeating? Why does it seem like with every pivotal moment, like when thousands were taking to the street to protest police brutality, we eventually end up with some version of the status quo? Perhaps it's the final result of the inherent friction between two competing ideas that are embedded in the American experience: That racial inequality is pervasive in our society—and the illusion that it's actually a problem of the past."

The positive contributions BBLM has made to Benicia are numerous and substantive, with impacts felt both within our local community and beyond. Since its inception, BBLM has been involved in organizing everything from poetry readings, youth-focused dance classes, community-wide education events in collaboration with local programs, to backpack and food giveaways, to the inaugural Juneteenth flag-raising and annual community celebration—the last being another provision of the resolution that was passed. Future planned events include a warm coat drive and food giveaway for our community's most vulnerable residents, an educational forum led by Indigenous community leader Mary Ann Buggs, an educational event that will introduce the history and nature of the Kwanzaa celebration, a march to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and more. Despite veiled suggestions otherwise, BBLM has shown over and over again that it stands in solidarity with the Benicia community, and is here to stay.

For two eminently qualified BBLM members—whose many years of professional, community, and lived experience in imagining and implementing real change are truly substantial—to be overlooked in the subcommittee's selection process is an affront to the effort BBLM has put into the drafting, passage, and realization of Resolution 20-103 along with its co-authors. BBLM strongly objects to the perceived efforts of the subcommittee to dilute and mismanage the CURE subcommittee before it has even had a chance to start working, and seeks active, meaningful dialogue with City Council, its staff, and the community in general to address these real and substantial concerns.

###

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# STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER

November 29, 2021

Contact:

BBLM Leadership Representative

Ms. Rozalind Sinnamon-Johnson

Phone: (707) 334-3060

Email: [beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com](mailto:beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com)

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SIGN THE LETTER

Organization

Your answer

---

Individual name(s)

Your answer

---

Comments

Your answer

---

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# Board/Commission/Committee Interview Questions

## General Questions:

1. What is your most recent community or civic volunteer experience? Please describe.
2. Do you have any applicable experience/training for the Committee United for Racial Equity (CURE)? If so, please describe.
3. What interests you about Committee United for Racial Equity (CURE)?

## Specific Questions:

### Committee United for Racial Equity (CURE)

1. What do you like about living / working in the City of Benicia?
2. In what way(s) do you see CURE as relevant work for the City of Benicia?
3. What do you see as the greatest personal challenge to leading racial equity work in the City of Benicia?
4. What do you see as the greatest institutional challenge to leading racial equity work in the City of Benicia?
5. Why are you interested in serving on CURE?

# STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER

November 29, 2021

Contact:

BBLM Leadership Representative

Ms. Rozalind Sinnamon-Johnson

Phone: (707) 334-3060

Email: [beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com](mailto:beniciablacklivesmatter@gmail.com)

## STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BENICIA BLACK LIVES MATTER

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, stand in solidarity with Benicia Black Lives Matter (“BBLM”) in condemning the Benicia City Council’s recent actions regarding the so-called Committee United for Racial Equity (“CURE”). First, we condemn City Council’s targeted restructuring of Resolution 20-103, which removed an essential provision that enshrined two BBLM members’ placements within CURE; second, we condemn the City Council’s selection-subcommittee’s decision, put forward by Council Members Tom Campbell and Trevor Macenski, to not advance two BBLM candidates, Brandon Greene and Kashanna Patton-Lee, to CURE. A summary of events to date follows the signatures of this statement.

These actions collectively represent Benicia City Council and its subcommittee’s concerted efforts to erase BBLM’s work and leadership in CURE’s formation and water down—or perhaps even block—CURE’s impact before its work has started. More disturbingly, the exclusion of Brandon Greene in particular, accompanied by troubling comments made on the record by Council Member Campbell, indicate that the actions taken toward Brandon were targeted and personal in nature, and not based on Brandon’s efforts to date—including his guidance as co-author of Resolution 20-103—nor based on his obvious eligibility to sit on CURE as Director of ACLU Northern California’s racial justice and economics program, among many other qualifications.

Similarly, the decision to block Kashanna appears to be a calculated choice by the subcommittee to erase her work in Benicia as a strong advocate for and leader in racial justice work, demonstrated by the many successful events that she has led or co-led to advance education and community building, such as BBLM’s inaugural Juneteenth celebration or the very recent Ruby Bridges March.

Instead, Benicia City Council Members appear to have chosen a future for CURE that may ultimately defeat its purpose. Rather than advancing those like Brandon and Kashanna, who have openly dedicated themselves to substantive, necessary change, and the hard work that will support it, City Council have chosen a model of “business as usual,” in which seats were assigned to those who may appear “safe”—those who are friends with or have openly stated that they are comfortable with the status quo in Benicia. This assessment does not apply to all of those who were selected for advancement, but it is clear that the subcommittee is not interested in the considerable effort, reflection, and self-examination required to make City government and Benicia in general truly equitable. Has the City of Benicia returned to its original position that Benicia is not in need of an equity study and that it is questionable whether Benicia even has a racism problem?

As individuals and organizations who visibly and vocally have championed racial justice in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, we the undersigned have determined that Benicia City Council’s actions appear steeped in its acceptance of white supremacy culture, wherein the Council—comprised almost entirely of white men—and the CURE appointments subcommittee—comprised exclusively of white men—took personal, unprofessional shots at a well-qualified Black professional and community advocate in order to maintain their power and privilege and to block any change that would threaten it.

Benicia City Council and Council Member Campbell and Macenski’s actions cannot be allowed to stand without scrutiny and condemnation. They are the antithesis of the change loudly called for by Black advocates and organizers nationwide. This is an issue of both good governance and community trust, something that the Benicia City Council seems to be lacking.

As such we not only sign on in support of the substance of the public comment submitted by BBLM at the Council meetings where these actions were taken, but also as democratic and community organizations dedicated to walking in our values and demanding better from our representatives.

f3onlinemarketing@gmail.com (not shared) [Switch account](#)

SIGN THE LETTER

Organization

Your answer

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Individual name(s)



Your answer

---

Comments

Your answer

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## SUMMARY OF EVENTS TO DATE

The standing City Council subcommittee called the Committee United for Racial Equity (“CURE”), so named by Benicia Black Lives Matter (“BBLM”) in collaboration with current City Manager Erik Upson, is an embodiment of Resolution 20-103 that was adopted at the August 25, 2020 City Council meeting. The resolution, as well as the formation of BBLM, were borne out of the anger, grief, and exhaustion felt nationwide after the viral murder of George Floyd. His tragic and avoidable death, one of many instances of police against Black and Brown communities that tapped into the voyeuristic interest of an American populace that had numerous times before and sadly numerous times after ignored the cries of Black and Brown communities, was said to be the beginning of a racial reckoning in America.

In Benicia, this energy was harnessed into youth-led demonstrations and organizing, all of which culminated in the founding and expansion of BBLM as well as the consideration of a resolution to address systemic inequity in Benicia—namely, Resolution 20-103. The content of this resolution was based almost entirely on recommendations emailed by BBLM co-founder Brandon Greene to then Mayor Elizabeth Patterson in response to the changes Brandon and our Black and Brown communities wished to see in Benicia. Through a series of meetings with the former City Manager and Erik Upson, who was Police Chief at the time, along with additional members of BBLM, the emailed proposal was formalized into the resolution and submitted for consideration and approval to the City Council. Though a year has now passed since that time, the memory of the August 2020 meeting is still vivid in the minds of BBLM members. At that meeting, not only was the necessity of such a position such as the one Dr. Maliika Chambers now holds subject to intense and painful scrutiny, but the resolution was also almost not passed due to a disagreement over the comparatively trivial amount of money that position would require the City to pay. Indeed, rather than make the position permanent, the position was made temporary. This was done under the auspices that Benicia was not in need of an equity study and that it was questionable whether Benicia even has a racism problem.

One year later, after patiently waiting for the work of CURE to begin, and after being promised that two of its members would have a place on the subcommittee that would not exist without them, BBLM members had to sit and watch as the Council—against public outcry—voted to reconstitute the membership of CURE, making all of the seats at large. BBLM members who had for a year been in constant contact with Dr. Chambers, whose position was established by BBLM’s own efforts, about when the work would start were told that they would have to apply and interview for the subcommittee. Three members applied: 1) Brandon Greene, Director of the Racial Justice and Economics Program for the Northern Californian arm of the ACLU; 2) Amira Barger, Public Health and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consultant; and 3) Kashanna Harmon-Lee, experienced medical professional and educational/health advocate. Of the three BBLM members who applied, only Amira was advanced.

The City Council subcommittee’s preferences to the mayor for other candidates despite the obvious qualifications of the BBLM applicants were made without adherence to and no respect for the work of those who are responsible for the proposed mission and mandate of CURE—in particular, the work of Brandon Greene. Instead, the subcommittee’s choice to advance other candidates appears to be a concerted action on behalf of City Council to erase the work of BBLM and to dilute the work of the CURE subcommittee before that work has even begun, an action in line with the current reporting about the lack of fidelity to the value of actual change, supposedly promised by the cries of allyship at the inception of this country’s so-called racial

reckoning. Indeed, just one year after making a series of grand promises to its Black and Brown communities, Benicia is now a hub of the inevitable backlash that accompanies any attempts to take bold steps to address racial inequity. With no voyeuristic element in the form of public attention to buoy its progress, Benicia's leadership has begun to retreat from its promises, even as it asks us to trust its intentions.

BBLM now asks the question - has the City of Benicia returned to its original position that Benicia is not in need of an equity study and that it is questionable whether Benicia has a racism problem?

"Why does this pattern keep repeating? Why does it seem like with every pivotal moment, like when thousands were taking to the street to protest police brutality, we eventually end up with some version of the status quo? Perhaps it's the final result of the inherent friction between two competing ideas that are embedded in the American experience: That racial inequality is pervasive in our society—and the illusion that it's actually a problem of the past."

The positive contributions BBLM has made to Benicia are numerous and substantive, with impacts felt both within our local community and beyond. Since its inception, BBLM has been involved in organizing everything from poetry readings, youth-focused dance classes, community-wide education events in collaboration with local programs, to backpack and food giveaways, to the inaugural Juneteenth flag-raising and annual community celebration—the last being another provision of the resolution that was passed. Future planned events include a warm coat drive and food giveaway for our community's most vulnerable residents, an educational forum led by Indigenous community leader Mary Ann Buggs, an educational event that will introduce the history and nature of the Kwanzaa celebration, a march to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and more. Despite veiled suggestions otherwise, BBLM has shown over and over again that it stands in solidarity with the Benicia community, and is here to stay.

For two eminently qualified BBLM members—whose many years of professional, community, and lived experience in imagining and implementing real change are truly substantial—to be overlooked in the subcommittee's selection process is an affront to the effort BBLM has put into the drafting, passage, and realization of Resolution 20-103 along with its co-authors. BBLM strongly objects to the perceived efforts of the subcommittee to dilute and mismanage the CURE subcommittee before it has even had a chance to start working, and seeks active, meaningful dialogue with City Council, its staff, and the community in general to address these real and substantial concerns.

###

#### About

Benicia Black Lives Matter is a grassroots community group organized to address anti-Black racism in the city of Benicia. There is a lack of Black representation across City leadership, departments, and voluntary boards. The lack of Black representation tells a story of our complacency as a community and more so, the impact on our Black Benicians lived experience. The good news is, we can rebuild the City of Benicia into a better Benicia, one commitment and one change at a time – and we have a strategy to do so. Our Strategy: Actively Commit to Change. The City of Benicia must commit to a specific vision of what a better, more inclusive and equitable future looks like. For additional information see [beniciablacklivesmatter.com](http://beniciablacklivesmatter.com).

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**RESOLUTION NO. 21- 128**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BENICIA REVISING AND REDEFINING THE COMMITTEE UNITED FOR RACIAL EQUITY (CURE) AND EXTENDING THE EQUITY AND DIVERSITY MANAGER POSITION FOR ONE YEAR**

**WHEREAS**, the death of George Floyd at the hands of Derek Chauvin, and other accused members of the Minneapolis Police Department, on May 25, 2020 prompted protests across the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, Benicia residents held protests here to share their experiences and voice their concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, a group of Benicia residents have formed a community organization called Benicia Black Lives Matter and made requests for changes to address unconscious bias in City operations, including the Benicia Police Department; and

**WHEREAS**, many of its requests for change in the Benicia Police Department have been made or are underway; and

**WHEREAS**, on August 25, 2020, the City Council held a study session in consideration of actions to address unconscious bias and authorized a temporary, part-time, 0.5 full time employee (FTE) for the Equity and Diversity Manager position, with funding of \$89,000; and established the Committee United for Racial Equity (CURE); and

**WHEREAS**, the Council directed that CURE be made up of two Council members, the City Manager, the Police Chief, other relevant City staff, and representatives designated by Benicia Black Lives Matter (BBLM); and

**WHEREAS**, the current member composition of CURE conflicts with the City's boards and commissions appointment process, as well as how staff support is utilized for all other boards and commissions, and does not reflect the spirit and representation of the community as an accountability partner and supporting group as the City engages in efforts to increase equity and inclusion in city administration activities; and

**WHEREAS**, staff recommends revising the structure of CURE to consist of two City Council members and five (5) at-large community members and defining CURE scope of work to act as an accountability partner and supporting group for completing the equity assessment, implementation plan, and anti-bias training; and

**WHEREAS**, the scope of work for the diversity, equity, and inclusion needs exceed a one-year timeline. Staff is recommending increasing the limited duration position through June 2023. The increased cost for this additional 14 months is approximately \$108,520, and crosses two fiscal years. Due to this fact, staff is requesting a budget amendment for FY 2021/22 and FY 2022/23. Staff is recommending a budget amendment for FY 2021/22 increasing appropriations

by \$15,500 (ORG 0102200-6003/6110/6120) offset by the use of available fund balance, and a budget amendment for FY 2022/23 increasing appropriations by \$93,020 (ORG 0102200-6003/6110/6120) offset by available fund balance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the City Council of the City of Benicia does hereby revise the Committee United for Racial Equity (CURE) with the following:

- Change the structure of CURE to consist of two City Council members and five (5) at-large community members; and
- Require all at-large community member positions on the Committee to be appointed through the current City of Benicia boards and commissions appointments process – application, interview, review, and recommendation; and
- Charge CURE to act as an accountability partner to City Council and City staff and supporting group for completing the equity assessment, implementation plan, and anti-bias training. While the Committee will not be responsible for overseeing activities and actions of City employees, the Committee would receive regular updates on the City’s progress in these areas, serve as a sounding board for community concerns, and provide insight and recommendations to align outcomes of this work with the broader community interests of common values, inclusion, belonging, and equity for all; and
- Reevaluate the contract with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Manager, and the role and duration of CURE at the end of FY 2022-23.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Benicia does hereby extend the part-time Equity and Diversity Manager position by one year, through Fiscal Year 2022-23.

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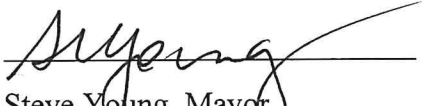
On motion of Council Member **Largaespada**, seconded by Council Member **Macenski**, the above Resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Benicia at a regular meeting of said Council held on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021, by the following vote:

Ayes: **Council Members Largaespada, Macenski, Strawbridge, and Mayor Young**

Noes: **None**

Absent: **Council Member Campbell**

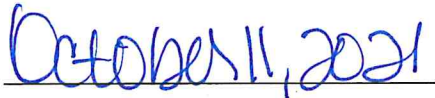
Abstain: **None**

  
Steve Young, Mayor

Attest:



Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk



Date

## Ashley Bussart

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**From:** Maliika Chambers  
**Sent:** Monday, December 6, 2021 6:46 PM  
**To:** Kashanna L.  
**Subject:** Re: Meeting with BBLM Governance team

Good evening Kashanna,

Thank you for reaching out. If I understand your email, you are requesting a meeting with me, members of the City Council, and the Boards and Commissions subcommittee to understand the appointment process, and voice concerns related to the recent CURE appointments.

The CURE committee is a City Council subcommittee, and is governed by the Ralph M. Brown Act. The requirements of the Brown Act apply to "legislative bodies" of local governmental agencies. The term "legislative body" is defined to include the governing body of a local agency (e.g., the city council) and any commission, committee, board, or other body of the local agency, whether permanent or temporary, decision-making or advisory, that is created by formal action of a legislative body.

The requested meeting and list of attendees is in direct violation of the Brown Act. Section 54952.2(b)(1) of the Brown Act prohibits a majority of members of a legislative body outside of a lawful meeting from directly or indirectly using a series of meetings to discuss, deliberate, or take action on any item of business within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. This means that while members of the public are welcome to meet with me, the Mayor, or Council members individually to ask general questions or voice concerns on a variety of topics, individually and collectively we are prohibited from discussing, deliberating, or taking action on any item of business within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body - which in this case, would specifically apply to the candidate selection and the Mayor's recommendation of appointments to the CURE subcommittee.

To clarify, I am not a member of the Board and Commissions subcommittee, nor do I have a vote or position in the subcommittee recommendations to the Mayor. As a member of City staff who will work with and support CURE activities, I attended the applicant interviews to observe, ask qualifying questions, and represent the unique nature and work of this inaugural committee. As part of the interview debrief, I provided some insight and shared my observations with the subcommittee members, after which I was excused from the remainder of the debrief session.

As always, I am available to meet with you and the members of the BBLM governance team on any topics that fall outside of the provisions of the Brown Act. Please let me know what date and time works for you and the team, and we can schedule accordingly.

All the best,

Maliika

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**From:** Kashanna L. [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Monday, December 6, 2021 8:18 AM  
**To:** Maliika Chambers <MChambers@ci.benicia.ca.us>  
**Subject:** Meeting with BBLM Governance team

Good morning,

I am contacting you to follow-up on an email I sent November 19, 2021. The email contained the following below.

On behalf of BBLM's Leadership and Government Action Teams, I am writing to request a meeting with you and the other members of the City Council subcommittee responsible for advancing preferences to the mayor for City Commissions and Board placements.

We seek an in-person meeting with all subcommittee members (and other City stakeholders as you prefer) together to best facilitate a meaningful and open dialogue with room for each attendee to voice their concerns and justifications. This smaller group of BBLM representatives can meet any morning after 10 am next week, except Tuesday or Thursday morning.

There is clearly more to discuss regarding the subcommittee's justification for excluding current BBLM members from the CURE subcommittee. For example, advancing two candidates who have left other organizational commitments but naming Brandon Greene's exit from the Open Government Commission as the reason for his exclusion shows an inconsistent application of expectations other candidates apparently did not have to adhere to. Rather than make assumptions about this subcommittee's motivations and potential prejudices, BBLM members hope to come to a place of agreement and understanding with you so we may move forward together in trust, mutual respect, and understanding.

Please feel free to call me directly to finalize a time that works best for all parties. You can reach me at this email address or by calling my cell [REDACTED]. To avoid potential conflicts and complications, BBLM members Brandon Greene and Amira Barger will not be present at this meeting.

Sincerely,

Kashanna Harmon-Lee

BBLM Secretary

"Movement towards change will never come, if we fail to move." K-Lee